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Farm Broadcasters Letter

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United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 447-4330

ACQ./SERIALS BRANCH

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Aug. 2, 1991

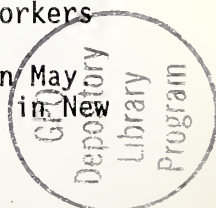
GENTLER BEE POSSIBLE -- Extensive interbreeding is taking place as Africanized honeybees move into areas already heavily populated by European honeybees, according to a new USDA study. Thomas L. Rinderer, a geneticist with USDA's Agricultural Research Service, led a team of scientists to sample honeybees in commercial hives across the neo-tropical Yucatan peninsula. "A larger proportion of the bees we sampled were hybrids ... rather than being completely Africanized or European," Rinderer says. **Contact:** Tom Rinderer (504) 766-6064.

SENIOR CITIZENS NEED MORE -- Older people, particularly older women, appear to need more vitamin B6 than currently recommended, a recent USDA study found. The three-month study of 61 to 71-year-old men & women broadens the age range of data for setting future Recommended Dietary Allowances for B6. "It's very difficult to pinpoint someone who has a marginal deficiency unless you do a lot of biochemical tests on blood and urine," says Study Leader Judy D. Ribaya-Mercado. **Contact:** Judy D. Ribaya-Mercado (617) 556-3128.

RUNNINGEN IS NEW PRESS SECRETARY -- Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan has appointed Roger Runningen as press secretary & director of the Office of Public Affairs. Runningen succeeds Kelly Shipp. Before joining USDA, Runningen covered agricultural, environmental & defense issues for the Small Newspaper Group, a company publishing daily & weekly newspapers in California, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa & Minnesota. A native of Houston, Minn., Runningen received his B.A. from Winona State Univ. in Minnesota. **Contact:** Roger Runningen (202) 447-4623.

INSECTS TRIP UP CRIMINALS -- In the movie "The Silence of the Lambs," a lab analysis of the insect, a moth left in the victim's mouths, leads to the identity of the killer. "That particular analysis is fiction," says Douglass R. Miller, a USDA entomologist, "but it's based on fact." USDA's Systematic Entomology Laboratory is the real-life counterpart of the one in the film. "Our daily job is to learn all we can about those 16 orders of insects that are beneficial or detrimental to agriculture," Miller says. **Contact:** Douglass R. Miller (301) 344-3183.

FARM LABOR -- During the week of June 9-15, there were 566 thousand hired workers on farms & ranches in the 11 states surveyed. This compares with 487 thousand workers during the May 1991 survey week. There were 64 thousand ag service employees working on farms & ranches in California & Florida, compared to 49 thousand in May. The average June wage rates hired workers received ranged from \$4.75 per hour in New Mexico to \$6.04 per hour in Florida. **Contact:** Tom Kurtz (202) 447-3570.



COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATES -- Eating starchy foods -- potatoes, breads, pastas & vegetables -- instead of high-sugar foods may prevent ill effects from low intakes of copper, USDA animal studies have found. In study after study, says Biochemist Meira Fields, young male rats developed severe anemia, enlarged hearts & died prematurely from a copper-deficient diet when the main source of carbohydrate was sugar. Sources of copper include: oysters, liver, cocoa, blackstrap molasses, black pepper, lobster, nuts & seeds & whole wheat. **Contact: Meira Fields (301) 344-2417.**

SCHOOL BREAKFAST -- USDA has awarded \$5 million in federal grants to school districts in 30 states to help start school breakfast programs in the next school year. "We've added more than 5,000 schools and a half-million children to the breakfast program nationwide since 1989, the year before the grants began," Sec. Madigan says. "Because of this program, many young people are receiving the nourishment they need to begin the school day." **Contact: Phil Shanholtzer (703) 756-3286.**

SUN WORSHIPPERS BEWARE! Most people are now aware the sun's ultraviolet B rays contribute to skin cancers and slather on sunblock for protection. Despite increased awareness, however, skin cancer rates continue to climb, says Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service Safety Specialist **Peggy Caruso**. The reasons for the climb are controversial. Some scientists claim the increase is caused by the sun's ultraviolet A rays. Sunscreens may not sufficiently filter out these rays & may actually promote the damage they are designed to prevent. Sunscreens may give a false sense of security & tempt some to stay in the sun too long. **Contact: Peggy Caruso (504) 388-4141.**

NEW JUICE -- A fruit bred from a tropical plant & a native American weed looks promising as a new juice drink, USDA scientists say. The fruit, which is a cross of the tropical passion fruit & the maypop weed (native to Maryland), has potential as a specialty crop for small-scale farmers or as an alternative crop "where winter freezes have wiped out citrus plantings," says USDA Horticulturist **Robert J. Knight**. The juice is sweet & sour with a rich aroma similar to tropical passion fruit, Knight says. **Contact: Robert J. Knight (912) 956-5656.**



AP'S DON KENDALL RETIRES -- *New Press Secretary Roger Runningen (right), congratulates Don Kendall on his upcoming retirement. USDA's Radio & TV Division helped plan the surprise retirement party for Kendall, who has covered agriculture for the Associated Press since 1968. Sec. Madigan attended, as well as Former Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland. (USDA Photo by Bob Nichols.)*

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1782 -- Gary Crawford takes you to visit kids who are benefitting from a USDA summer food program. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1264 -- Family meetings; a summer food program for kids; nutrition info for kids; watermelon -- a great summer treat; turkey bacon? (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1772 -- USDA News Highlights; Most Favored Nation status for the USSR; cattle numbers rising; Saudi Arabia -- flourishing market; feed grain program comments. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1431 -- Vitamin C & mutagens, DNA, immunity, fertility & gingivitis. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Mon., Aug. 12, U.S. crop production, world ag supply & demand; Tues., Aug. 13, crop/weather update, farm labor, world ag/grain situation, world cotton situation, world oilseed situation; Thurs., Mon., Aug. 19, feed outlook, cattle on feed report. (These are the USDA reports we know about in advance. Our Newsline carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Please don't let the lack of a story listing keep you from calling!)

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.
Material changed at 5 p.m., EDT, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

FEATURES -- Lynn Wyvill reports on help for farmers with disabilities; DeBoria Janifer reports on USDA's Forest Service's watchable wildlife program; University of Missouri's Mike Thomas reports on a better way to dispose of yard waste; Michigan State University's Dave Luciani reports on what gives pickles their crunch; University of Illinois' Gary Beaumont reports on lessons learned on the oldest experimental field; & Mississippi State University's Artis Ford reports on a Japanese taste test of Mississippi specialty foods.

ACTUALITIES -- USDA Meteorologist Norton Strommen on the weather & crop development & the new 30- & 90-day outlooks; USDA Economist Ian McCormick on the oilcrops.

PSA -- National Forest System Centennial.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- Lynn Wyvill reports on low-maintenance gardens & DeBoria Janifer reports on partnerships in the national forests.

EVERY OTHER WEEK -- Agriculture Update, five minutes of USDA farm program info, in news desk format with B-Roll footage.

Available on Satellite Westar 4, Transponder 12D (Channel 23), audio 6.2 or 6.8:

THURSDAY7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EDT
SATURDAY10 - 10:45 a.m., EDT
MONDAY8 - 8:45 a.m., EDT

OFFMIKE

DROUGHT ALERT...has been declared for 78 of the 88 counties in Ohio, says Bob Ziegler (WIMA/WIMT, Lima, Ohio). Showers are forecast, but so far relief has been little & spotty. Soybeans are at the stage when moisture is critical to development. Bob says county fair coverage has begun. He and the crew will be broadcasting from 10 fairs in his station's region.

AREA OF DROUGHT...extends from Indiana to Pennsylvania. Gary Truitt (AgriAmerica Network, Indianapolis, Ind.) says crops look green but closer inspection reveals few ears & pods in response to no moisture during July. Rain during early August will be crucial.

BIGGEST NEED...in Arkansas is good commodity prices, says James Guthrie (KFIN, Jonesboro). Crops are late but they look fine, even cotton has generally recovered from the wet spring. Jim says what producers need now are higher prices for rice, cotton & beans -- it's a lot more satisfying to irrigate \$7.50 beans than \$5 ones.

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Office of Public Affairs
Radio-TV Division
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250-1300

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IRRIGATION...is again saving the corn crop in eastern Nebraska, says Roger Flemmer (KFAB, Omaha). Seventy percent of corn is irrigated in the state. Roger says dryland acres need moisture; plants are curling & the southeast section of the state is dry which reduced wheat yields.

MAJOR ISSUES...in the wool industry will be discussed by Taylor Brown (Northern Ag Network, Billings, Mont.) during the Tall Timber Tour meeting of the American Wool Council in Vail, Colo., next month. The wool referendum will be conducted during the last half of August. Taylor says he and Rick Haines are following the grazing fee increase story closely.

DAIRY & DISASTER...legislation in Congress is being covered by John Everly (KDTH, Dubuque, Iowa) for listeners in the northeast Iowa/southwest Wisconsin area served by the station. John says dry weather and pests are reducing yields in the third & fourth crop of alfalfa.

VIC POWELL
Chief, Radio & TV Division